



NOAA FY 2000 Budget Request Fact Sheet

RESOURCE PROTECTION INITIATIVE



Enforcement and Surveillance

NOAA Fisheries is requesting an increase of \$1 million in FY 2000 to restore overfished species and better protect endangered marine species by improving compliance with the nation's fisheries regulations. The NOAA Fisheries Office of Law Enforcement will increase its ability to target blatant offenders, support endangered salmon and sea turtle recovery, and prepare to implement a national vessel management system (VMS) that will provide real-time monitoring of the commercial fishing fleet. These efforts will have a dramatic impact on restoring and sustaining our nation's living marine resources. This request is a key component of NOAA's Resource Protection Initiative, and complements and supports other components requested under this effort.

In addition, the gross under-reporting of fisheries catch data and participation in organized fraudulent activities not only serve to undermine the long-term sustainability of fishery resources, but also punish the majority of commercial fishers who comply with conservation measures. Developing a national VMS will be a major step toward achieving consistent compliance and enforcing against offenders. Addressing these areas of violations and the impact on recovery and sustainability of overfished and threatened species is a priority.



NOAA Officers working with shrimpers to protect sea turtles.

NOAA Budget		FY 2000 Change \$M
National Marine Fisheries Service		
Conservation and Management Operations		
(ESA Recovery Planning/Salmon)		\$22.4
(ESA Recovery Planning/Other Species)		\$ 5.1
(Conserving Ocean Biodiversity)		\$ 2.6
(Enforcement and Surveillance)		\$ 1.0
Other Accounts		
(Pacific Coastal Salmon Conservation Fund)		\$100.0
NOAA Resource Protection Initiative - -Total		\$131.1

Why Enforcement is Needed

Strengthening NOAA's ability to combat complex criminal and civil violations committed by blatant offenders provides the opportunity to bring to justice those who are causing the most damage to marine resources and their long-term sustainability. Increasing the number of personnel and resources to effectively support threatened and endangered salmon recovery throughout the West Coast will significantly aid in this critical effort.

As human population and development continue to increase, so too will the pressures on protected species and their habitats. To be successful in recovering and rebuilding these resources, NOAA is committed to establishing the long-term public partnerships necessary to sustain both the socioeconomic needs of communities and the ecological needs of the natural resources. Voluntary compliance will be critical to accomplishing this goal.

Responding to the Problem

Working in close partnership with the states, tribes and industry, the Office of Law Enforcement is focusing its efforts against those who undermine the conservation and sustainability of marine resources. NOAA will address the serious issues of recovering threatened and endangered Pacific salmon and sea turtles through an enhanced constituent and industry-focused Community Oriented Policing and Problem Solving (COPPS) program. The COPPS program is a long-term community outreach effort designed to enhance public awareness and establish voluntary compliance with natural resource conservation measures.

NOAA is also developing a national VMS program to provide comprehensive and consistent monitoring of the nation's commercial fishing fleets. A national VMS is critical for meeting the needs of fisheries conservation and management in the next



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century. In addition to the technical abilities for easy data reporting and enhanced safety at sea, VMS benefits the majority of commercial fishing vessels who comply with conservation laws by enforcing against offenders and enhancing our ability to protect federal waters against noncompliant foreign fishing vessels.

Once implemented and operational, the national VMS program could cost as little as \$800 per vessel-the current cost of two observer days. As well as providing direct economic benefits to commercial fishers, the VMS provides NOAA with 365 days per year of accurate position reports, continuous monitoring, and nearly perfect compliance with open and closed seasons, closed areas and international boundaries.

NOAA's Role

NOAA Fisheries, under the Sustainable Fisheries Act, Marine Mammal Protection Act, and Endangered Species Act, must rebuild overfished stocks and recover protected species throughout the over 3 million square miles of ocean that comprise the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone and the river systems that are home to salmon. The Office of Law Enforcement is charged with ensuring compliance with all marine resource conservation efforts under the jurisdiction of NOAA.

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